



T E X A S
FOREST SERVICE
The Texas A&M University System

News Release

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Relevant websites:
<http://texasforests.tamu.edu>
<http://www.texasoakwilt.org>

from Texas Forest Service

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Help stop spread of deadly oak wilt

AUSTIN, Texas—With increasing summer temperatures, more red and live oaks are succumbing to oak wilt, a devastating fungal disease striking millions of trees in over 60 counties across Central and West Texas. Texas Forest Service strongly urges landowners to be on the lookout for symptoms of oak wilt on their property, and to destroy infected red oak trees before they begin to lose their leaves in the fall season.

Because of the extremely dry conditions in previous years, people may have attributed tree loss to drought, however this year the main culprit is oak wilt, according to the Texas Forest Service.

Red oaks that die during the summer season can also be the source of long-distance spread of the disease the following spring. Red oaks that are in the process of dying may produce fungal spore mats under their bark next spring, and sap feeding beetles transfer these spores long distances, thus starting a new infection center. If a landowner has red oaks that die from oak wilt (especially from late summer through fall), they must be destroyed or removed before fall or risk starting new infections.

Red oaks that fall victim to oak wilt range from areas in North Central Texas to South Central Texas and westward, and include species such as Spanish oak, Shumard oak, and Blackjack oak. Once infected, these species die within a matter of weeks, with foliage on the tree turning from yellow to red to brown—almost a false, fall coloration. The brown leaves may stay attached to the trees for a period of time.

For additional information about oak wilt and techniques for slowing its spread, logon to <http://www.texasoakwilt.org>.

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Note to editor: High-resolution photos available upon request.

